

Attn Ag Committee
February 20, 2007

Chairwoman Krista Lee Evans and members of the
House Agriculture Committee

I would like to testify in favor of both HB720 and HB726. Both are much needed improvements to Montana law. Both benefit the health and welfare of animals and both will also benefit the people of Montana financially.

HB720 allowing control of dog breeding facilities in the State will protect many Montanans from needless heartache and veterinary and legal expenses. I would like to see this section cover the breeding and selling of cats also. I would like to see paragraph (6) changed so that it would cover any facility selling more than 15 rather than 20 dogs or cats.

The new Section 1 of HB726 will even save lives of people who refuse to be evacuated without their pets during a major disaster. In Section 2 the amendments to Montana's Animal cruelty laws are very important. The last few years we have experienced a number of hoarding cruelty cases that cost Montana communities thousands of dollars. Since hoarding has been determined to be a mental illness, evaluation and treatment is the only final solution. The amendments also provides for something legal that can be done before a hoarding problem gets out of hand.

Thank you very much for your consideration,

Judith Fenton

Judith Fenton, One Grizzly Way, Clancy, MT 59634

I have been doing animal welfare volunteer work for about 35 years, first with the Lewis & Clark Humane Society, then the Federated Humane Societies of Montana, the Montana Animal Care Association, and now with the Foundation for Animals. I owned a dog and cat boarding and grooming facility in the Helena valley before retirement.